

Surah 42. Ash-Shura

Asad: And [as for the followers of earlier revelation,] they broke up their unity, out of mutual jealousy, only after they had come to know [the truth].¹⁵ And had it not been for a decree that had already gone forth from thy Sustainer, [postponing all decision] until a term set [by Him], all would indeed have been decided between them [from the outset].¹⁶ As it is, behold, they who have inherited their divine writ from those who preceded them¹⁷ are [now] in grave doubt, amounting to suspicion, about what it portends.¹⁸

Malik: The people did not become divided into sects until after knowledge had come to them out of envy among themselves. Had your Rabb not issued the word to defer their punishment till an appointed time, the matter would have already been settled between them. The fact is that those who were made to inherit the Book after them, are surely in disquieting doubt concerning it.

Pickthall: And they were not divided until after the knowledge came unto them, through rivalry among themselves; and had it not been for a Word that had already gone forth from thy Lord for an appointed term, it surely had been judged between them. And those who were made to inherit the Scripture after them are verily in hopeless doubt concerning it.

Yusuf Ali: And they became divided only after knowledge reached them through selfish envy as between themselves. Had it not been for a Word that went forth before from thy Lord (tending) to a Term appointed the matter would have been settled between them: but truly those who have inherited the Book after them are in suspicious (disquieting) doubt concerning it. ^{4544 4545 4546}

Transliteration: Wama tafarraqoo illa min baAAdi ma jahumu alAAilmu baghyan baynahum walawla kalimatun sabaqat min rabbika ila ajalin musamman laqudiya baynahum wainna allatheena oorithoo alkitab min baAAadhim lafee shakkin minhu mureebin

Khattab:

They did not split ?into sects? out of mutual envy until knowledge came to them.¹ Had it not been for a prior decree from your Lord for an appointed term,² the matter would have certainly been settled between them ?at once?. And surely those who were made to inherit the Scripture³ after them are truly in alarming doubt about this ?Quran?.

Author Comments

15 - Lit., "they did not break up their unity until after knowledge had come to them" - i.e., the knowledge that God is one, and that the teachings of all of His prophets were essentially the same. Cf. [2:213](#) and, more explicitly, [23:53](#), which comes immediately after the statement that "this community of yours is one single community" (see also note [30] on [23:53](#)).

16 - For an explanation of this passage, see note [29] on [10:19](#).

17 - Lit., "who have become heirs to the divine writ after them": obviously referring to the Bible and its followers in later times.

18 - Lit., "about it" - i.e., in doubt as to whether the relevant scripture has really been revealed by God, and, ultimately, as to whether there is any truth in the concept of "divine revelation" as such.

29783 -

No community split into believers and disbelievers until they received the knowledge given by their prophet.

29783 -

No community split into believers and disbelievers until they received the knowledge given by their prophet.

29784 -

That He will delay their judgment until the Hereafter.

29784 -

That He will delay their judgment until the Hereafter.

29785 -

i.e., the Jews and Christians.

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4544 - Cf. ii. 213. If you reject Truth after it has reached you, it can only be through selfish contumacy or envy.

4545 - Cf. x. 19, and n. 1407. Allah's decree has allowed a certain Term during which a sinner has the chance of repentance and forgiveness. Were it not so, sin would be punished at once, and the matter would be decided straightway. So also, when people reject Truth from selfish or contumacious motives, they get rope: perchance they may repent.

4546 - Cf. xiv. 9 and n. 1884. "Those who have inherited the Book" are the People of the Book, of the ages

since the Book or Revelation came to them. Referring to the Jews and Christians, contemporary with our Prophet, how true it is that they were broken up into hostile sects which hated and persecuted each other! Islam came to unite them, and it did. For the present phases of Christianity and Judaism are of later growth.

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